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STATE, CHURCH, AND SCHOOL IN FRANCE

II. THE CAMPAIGN FOR LAY EDUCATION

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In the religious symbolism of the Orient there occur strange figures: bodies of men with hawks' heads, lions with wings, cats with human features, serpents with wide fins, creatures literally "half angel and half beast." Perhaps these strange figures are symbols of a mental confusion, the coexistence of contradictory attributes inexplicable in their persistent combinations. At any rate they well typify the partial and confused apprehensions which we have of the psychology, the ethics, the religions of foreign peoples. We see an institution or hear a name, and we translate it into the reality which we have been trained to associate with that institution or name. The church, for example, means to some the quiet, white meeting-house, with its square steeple, on the village green of a New England town. We know that the cathedral of Notre Dame bears little resemblance to this meeting-house, and we should smile at the idea of the devil-headed stone gargoyles thrusting their millennial spouts from the stern eaves of the white clapboarded walls, or of a line of rude sheds with hitching-beams, gnawed half through by the deacons' restive plough-horses, surrounding the flying buttresses of the great cathedral. Yet when we leave the ground of material things and ascend to the realm of the ideal, we do just this violence to consistency. We carry into our idea of the church the training, the prejudices, the warnings, the ideals which we have grown familiar with. We fit a hawk's head on a man's body and put wings on lions. We interpret foreign institutions by domestic standards, often by provincial and even parochial standards. Perhaps it is not possible entirely to overcome this inconsistency, but at least a great deal can be done toward the

proper understanding of foreign institutions by a study of their historic origin and growth. To know anything about the church in France in the nineteenth century, one must know the history of the church and of France for the thousand years preceding.

Obviously, such a task as an outline of that history is not contemplated in the present series of articles. It is enough here to recall to the reader the truth that institutions generally last in proportion to their serviceability to the society in which they exist; and that, consequently, the explanation of the long period of domination of the church in France is to be found not so much in the corruption or torpidity of the people as in the real and lasting benefits which that institution gave to the state.

Chief among those services was the preservation of learning and the maintenance of some form of instruction throughout the long centuries of darkness and confusion which preceded and followed the empire of Charlemagne. A thousand years ago, when the clash of feudal warfare made horrid tumult all over Europe, and the mailed fist of lord and baron scorned to hold a pen, the bishops were conducting schools in connection with their cathedrals, and the monks were clearing forests and draining swamps to make the fertile fields and gardens of the Europe of today. We noticed in the preceding article the Capitulary of 787 in which Charlemagne enjoined upon the bishops the careful study of grammar and logic, for the better understanding of the Scriptures, and we saw how ten years later the Bishop of Orléans opened schools for the children of the parishioners in his diocese. All the great universities of the Middle Ages were founded either by churchmen or by pious kings and dukes, primarily for the study of theology. They were all under the rectorship of ecclesiastics, their teachers requiring the episcopal license, and their degrees subject to episcopal approval. The finest secondary schools of Europe in the early modern age were those founded and conducted by the Jesuits. And up to the eve of the French Revolution not only instruction in the schools, but the distribution of charities, the maintenance of asylums and refuges, the support of hospitals—in fact every work of humanity was the work of the church. The kings hunted, feasted, warred, reveled,

spent, and punished. The church alone healed, instructed, gave, comforted.

I am aware that this sounds little like the language of denunciation found in the sections of the histories of the French Revolution which deal with the church, or like Voltaire's impassioned diatribes against *l'infame*. It is true that the church was intolerant, persecuting, corrupt in its high officials, opposed to the light of the new philosophy and science. The majority of the *cahiers* of the clergy in 1789 demanded ecclesiastical censure of the press and control of all schools. Advanced spirits, like Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, had every reason for fighting clerical obscurantism and obstructionism to the death. But for the common people of the peasant or industrial classes, for nine-tenths or even ninety-nine one-hundredths of the population of France the church was the only source of uplift or aid—and the record of some of the country priests, who on a few hundred francs a year supplied food, medicine, instruction, edification to the people of their parishes, would bear comparison with the most devoted of our settlement workers or home missionaries. It was this long experience of responsibility that gave the French priest the authority he has exercised till but yesterday over the primary schools throughout France. And the struggle of the church to maintain that influence after the state awoke to its responsibilities toward the people has formed the tragic history of French education through the century just ended.

So much by way of introduction, to guard against the popular misapprehension that the quarrel in France between state and church over the schools has been due to the church's thrusting its hand into the work of the state. Quite the contrary. The church is trying to *keep* in its hands the work through long centuries abandoned to it by the state, but now resumed as a national, public, and secular responsibility.

The educational machine established by Napoleon lasted with but little change to the middle of the nineteenth century. On the downfall of the great emperor and the restoration of the Bourbon line in 1814, the Roman Catholic church again became the state religion, whereas under Napoleon's *concordat* it had simply been

acknowledged as "the religion of the majority of Frenchmen." In 1821 the priest was ranked with the professor in the university, and the bishop was given the right of supervision of all the *collèges* in his diocese. The schools ceased, naturally, with the overthrow of Napoleon, to be recruiting grounds for the army; the seminaries were returned to the priesthood; the Institute, dissolved by Napoleon, was restored in 1830; and two years later the great man whose name heads the list of laborers for a free public lay-school system in France was chosen minister of public instruction—François Guizot. Guizot, by his enthusiastic devotion to the cause of public education, interested the authorities of France from King Louis Philippe down to the least secretary in the bureau of his department. Before his first year of service was ended he had organized a system of public primary instruction throughout the country, and in June, 1833, secured the passage of a law requiring each of the eighty-seven departments of France to support a normal school for primary teachers, "either by itself or in connection with one or more neighboring departments."

This law establishing normal schools throughout France was the most important step in public education ever taken in the country. The convention in 1795 had decreed a normal school at Paris, which had been opened in the great amphitheater of the museum with 1,400 pupils. But it had lasted only about four months in the stormy politics of that last year of the revolutionary government. Napoleon had decreed the establishment of normal schools in each of the academies of his university; but they were not yet established when "Waterloo swept away the decree and the minister and the emperor." Up to Guizot's ministry and the revival of state projects of education after the revolution of 1830, there were only two or three scattered schools for the training of teachers in France (one at Strassburg, one near Metz, and one at Bar le Duc). The imperative need of training schools for a public educational system is too obvious to require comment. A significant provision of Guizot's law was that moral instruction received the first place in the curriculum of the normal schools. To be sure, religious instruction was also

included, and the candidates for admission were required to pass an examination in the doctrines of the religion which they professed. They were also bound to serve at least ten years in the public-school service or return the cost of their education. Between 1833 and 1843 about seven-eighths of the teachers who entered the public schools were graduates of these normal schools.

Something of the effect on the country of the establishment of the Guizot system of primary education may be realized from a few figures. In 1820 only 34 out of 100 women were able to sign their act of marriage in France, while in 1870, 70 out of 100 were able to do so. Again, in 1820 there were but 22,000 primary schools with only some 800,000 pupils in all France (scarcely more than in the schools of the city of New York at present). These had grown by the middle of the century to 63,000 schools with 3,785,000 pupils—a gain of 400 per cent in pupils in thirty years. When we realize that this immense gain was not (as has been in the case of the American states) due to great leaps in population, but rather to the dissemination of learning through a rather stationary population, its significance becomes all the more striking. There is not a parallel record in the educational statistics of the world.

For all this stimulus in education and spread of the primary instruction, the period between the overthrow of Napoleon and the establishment of the second French Republic (1848) was one of fundamental discord. The Revolution had announced the program of free lay education for every child of the land, and that ideal remained before the eyes of the educational reformers throughout the Napoleonic era and the Restoration. At the same time, by Napoleon's decree of 1808, the supervision of the clergy over the state *lycées* was sanctioned, and the Roman Catholic religion was made the basis of education in all departments of the imperial university. How could a teacher satisfy both the Napoleonic commands and the revolutionary principle? If he taught the concord of beliefs he was impious in the eyes of the church; if he taught the discord of beliefs he was seditious in the eyes of the state. The imposition of a pedagogical orthodoxy might go unquestioned in the days of the old *régime*, when opposition

to clericalism took the rather indifferent form of sarcastic comments among the wits of the salons; but after the breath of regeneration of the years 1789-91 had swept over the nation, the imposition of ecclesiastical control upon the school was no longer the restoration of authority: it was rather the establishment of anarchy.

For between the two kinds of instruction, lay and clerical, there is fundamental and incessant antagonism. To quote from a discourse of Paul Bert's at the time of the passage of the law freeing primary education from the control of the church (1881):

In the domain of matter the lay instruction shows us nature subject to fixed, eternal, invariable laws, and teaches us that to master nature we must study and apply these laws. Ecclesiastical instruction, on the other hand, does not recognize natural laws, or, if it does, has them continually contradicted and violated by supernatural powers, benevolent or malevolent. To master nature, then, one must placate or solicit these powers. Lay instruction incites men to work and gives them confidence in the fruits of their labors, in personal progress and social betterment, while ecclesiastical instruction keeps man in mistrust of himself and urges him to prayers and prostrations in lieu of labor. In the domain of history, lay instruction values characters according to their contributions to the development of civilization and the liberation of humanity, while clerical education esteems characters for their services to the church. In the domain of morals, the lay instruction inculcates the eternal rules of conduct recognized and refined by the unfolding individual and social conscience; while the church confuses this clear issue with the requirements of liturgies and the duty of the observance of ceremonies often meaningless and superstitious. . . . In every way these two kinds of instruction antagonize each other: one proceeds from the sense of justice, the other from the gift of grace; one depends on reason for the discovery of truth, the other looks to faith for the revelation of truth; one looks to this present age as the scene of its labors and makes its chief duty the production of citizens who in the community, in the family, in business and social relations fulfil their mutual duties in love and good will; the other regards (officially, at least) this world as a vale of tears, a mere vestibule to heaven, a place of probation filled with temptations which are to be overcome, not to make a man a stronger moral individual and a better member of society, but to win him a place in heaven. For long years these two kinds of instruction have been existing side by side in our schools. It is time that one of them be eliminated, and that justice, science, liberty, and humanity be allowed free course in the educational system of France.

These are strong words, and probably they would have been somewhat moderated if spoken twenty years later. But they show precisely what was the inconsistency, the anarchy, in the educational system of the Restoration and the Orléans monarchy.

The second republic (of 1848) was socialistic in character, and the conservatives took advantage of the fact to make it a scandal in the eyes of both politician and ecclesiastic. They brought about the re-establishment of despotism by the *coup d'état* of December 2, 1850; and they accomplished the full subordination of the schools to the church by the famous Loi Falloux of the same year. Napoleon's decree of 1808 had placed the state *lycées* under clerical supervision. The law of 1821 had extended the same supervision over all the *collèges*. And now the whole system of primary education as organized by Guizot, including the departmental normal schools for the training of primary teachers, was put under clerical surveillance. The priest in each tiny village was made an inquisitor over the school teacher. He could have his spies among the students of tender age, to report any hints of heresy in the teaching and bring the preceptor to book. If the parents upheld the teacher in any scientific interpretation of history or free handling of literature, the priest could hold the terrors of exclusion from the sacraments of the church over the recalcitrant parents. Furthermore the church entered directly into local politics through the influence of this infamous Loi Falloux, and dragged the primary schools into politics with it. For it used the schools as campaign centers to spread its recommendation of candidates who stood in the good favor of the clergy, bringing pressure to bear on the fathers through the children, and holding the threat of dismissal or suspension over the heads of the teachers who did not work for the candidate indorsed by Rome.

At the head of the program of instruction were placed, to be sure, the subjects of ethics (or *morale*) and religion. But, as a matter of fact, there was no ethical instruction, as we understand the term. One will seek in vain in the catalogues of the Parisian publishers and in the lists published by the ministers of public instruction for the title of any books on moral instruc-

tion. On the contrary, one finds about 1850 the following list of textbooks supplied by the city of Paris under the department of moral and religious instruction:

Elementary Course.—Catechism of the Diocese; *Outline of Sacred History*, by M. Wallon.

Intermediate Course.—*Sacred History*, by M. Wallon; *Sacred History*, by M. Edom.

Advanced Course.—*Epistles and Gospels*, by M. Wallon; *Sacred History*, by the abbé Drioux.

In other words, the only book in which any ethical instruction could possibly be found was the catechism; and everybody familiar with the catechism of a French diocese in the middle of the nineteenth century will know what sort of ethical instruction that means. It is a jumble of theology, metaphysics, natural history, civil and penal law, physical geography, and Jesuitism. One searches in vain in it for any teaching of love of country, of respect for personal dignity, of belief in progress, of the sentiment of social solidarity, of the cult of liberty, of the practice of tolerance.

It would be difficult to imagine a more doleful state of public education than that prevailing in France during the second empire when Napoleon III crushed out political liberty and the subservient priesthood held out to him the sacred font in which to wash his hands polluted with the blood of his fellow-citizens. Victor Hugo, in his magnificent lines of defiance, hurled at *Napoléon le Petit* from his exile on the island of Guernsey, has left us the classic protest against the perversion of liberty in France:

Si l'on n'est plus que mille, eh bien! j'en suis. Si même
Ils ne sont plus que cent, je brave encore Sylla.
S'il en demeure dix, je serai le dixième.
Et s'il n'en reste qu'un, je serai celui-là.

Then came Metz, Wissembourg, and Sedan. The second Napoleon was overthrown by the arms of Prussia, and the Third Republic was proclaimed on September 4, 1870. The political exiles returned. And with them came also the educational exiles, for the men who advocated the continuance of the Revolutionary education of Condorcet and the liberal system of Guizot had been

obliged also to quit France or suspend their teaching. One of them, Ferdinand Buisson, had gone to Neuchâtel in Switzerland, whence he was to return to become the leading figure in the fight of the liberals of the Third Republic for a system of free public education divorced from the interference of the church. For twenty years M. Buisson was director of primary education in France. And for the last decade he has been a member of the French Chamber of Deputies, where he served as chairman of the committee which drew up the law of 1905 separating church and state in France. He is still active in the battle for lay education, and his speech of January 19, 1910, in the Chamber of Deputies, on the budget for the French schools, was a masterly review of the principles of non-sectarian education bequeathed to France by the fathers of the Revolution.

A group of liberal educators, including the philosophers Félix Pécaut and Paul Bert, the ministers Duruy and Jules Ferry, the administrators Gréard and Buisson, set to work to reorganize the educational system of France as soon as the Third Republic was fairly established. The decade 1879-89 saw the foundation of the present French system.

We have space only briefly to review the chief educational acts of that decade. In 1879 the law providing for normal schools in all the departments of France was revived. It will be remembered that this law was part of the Guizot program of 1833; but the Loi Falloux of 1850 had replaced Guizot's normal schools by training schools designated by the Academic Council (a body under complete clerical control), and had even allowed the *conseil général* of each department to close the normal schools. The law of 1879 did more than to revive the program of M. Guizot, for it extended normal instruction to women throughout France.

In 1880 came the law making primary instruction free, and the next year a law making it compulsory and secular. The first and second articles of the law of 1881 read as follows:

ART. 1. Religious instruction shall no longer be given in the public primary schools; in private schools it may be given. The primary schools shall have vacation one day in the week besides Sunday [that day is Thurs-

day] in order to allow parents, if they wish, to give such religious instruction to their children as seems good to them.

ART. 2. Sections 18 and 44 of the law of 15 March, 1850 (Loi Falloux), are abrogated, which sections gave to the minister of worship the right of inspection, surveillance, and direction of the public and private primary schools.

These two articles are the charter of public lay education in France today.

We may add that even this law of 1881 did not go far enough to suit leaders like Bert, Buisson, and Ferry. There was incorporated in the law the famous Article 7, which read:

No one shall be allowed to direct an establishment of education, public or private, of any order or grade, nor to teach in the school, if he belongs to a non-authorized congregation [i.e., to a religious or monastic order owing obedience to an authority outside of France].

Paul Bert made a strong speech in the Chamber of Deputies in support of this article, in which he most unmercifully scored the Jesuit morals taught in the religious schools. The Chamber passed the article, but it was defeated in the Senate, March 9, 1880, and had to wait twenty years for its adoption in the famous Associations Law of 1901.

Further educational legislation in the decade 1879-89 comprised the re-enactment in 1886 of the laws of the Revolutionary assemblies providing that each commune should maintain at least one primary school, and the law of 1889 by which the state assumed the payment of the salaries of all the public primary teachers in France. The budget of primary education by this law jumped from 26,000,000 francs in 1880 to 129,000,000 in 1890. And at present the primary schools (*écoles primaires*) cost the state more than half the 250,000,000 francs, which are yearly spent for education in France.¹

These educational laws of the decade 1879-89 were only part of a great movement toward the realization of the republican ideas of the men of 1789. The experience of France under the reactionary clerical despotism of Napoleon III prepared the way

¹ The reader will recall that the *écoles primaires* in France include grades which with us are called "grammar" and "high." In the budget of education are included the appropriations for the National Library, the Bureau of Longitude, and other scientific commissions. It is interesting to note that the military and naval budget of France is over five times as large as the educational budget (about 1,500,000,000 francs).

for a thorough overhauling of the state on his fall. The army, the police, the laws of marriage and divorce, even the funeral regulations were all subjected to a thorough political house-cleaning, parallel in some respects to that which has been going on in our own country in the last decade. France was not occupying the place in commerce, agriculture, manufacture, industry, to which the genius and diligence of her sons entitled her. The fundamental defect of her education was the lack of correspondence of training and vocation. For an age in which economic problems were occupying increasing attention throughout the world and the intense struggle for economic supremacy was enlisting the best efforts of each nation, France had only the poor priest-ridden education of the *Loi Falloux*, with its catechism and its *Sacred History* of M. Wallon, to offer in its common schools. For an age in which every youth needed to be taught the lessons of self-dependence, of social progress, of human solidarity, there was only the clash of ecclesiastical, parental, and preceptorial authority in each village, a horrid régime of mutual distrust and sneaking delation, the repression of the generous instincts of optimistic youth, and the substitution of an artificial and catechised seminary.

The servility and superstition of the era reached its height in the *Syllabus*, published by Napoleon's protégé, Pope Pius IX, in 1864, in which every gain of modern science and every ideal of modern liberalism were treated with most insolent defiance:

Anathema be he who claims that human society can be constituted or governed without distinction between true and false religions. [That is to say, on the basis of religious neutrality, which is actually the basis on which the most progressive nations of the world stand today.] Anathema be he who claims that liberty of conscience and worship ought to be guaranteed by law, and that citizens are free to manifest their convictions by word or otherwise, without subject to correction by civil or ecclesiastical authority. [That is to say, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and the most precious clauses of our own Constitution are only impious pretensions of men in rebellion against the ordinance of God, in the establishment through the Roman priesthood of the one true religion.] Anathema be he who says that the Roman pontiff ought to reconcile himself and come into

harmony with progress, liberalism, and modern civilization. [That is to say the church condemns by the infallible word of its high priest every aim dear to the democracy of the nineteenth century.]

Between such clerical influence and control over the educational system of France (as it had existed since the *Loi Falloux* of 1850) and the principles of the Revolution as revived by the great educational leaders of the Third Republic there could be only war to the knife. The champion of the old order, Count Albert de Mun, boasted openly that the *Syllabus* was the oriflamme of his party. "*Le Syllabus*, voilà notre drapeau!" he exclaimed in a speech in Brittany in 1897. We have seen what were the sentiments inscribed on that banner. The champions of lay education, on the other hand, go back to the noble words of Danton: "After bread the first need of the people is education." "A nation, like a man," says Buisson, "needs principles, clear ideals, motives of action, not empirical and variable like selfish interests, not blind like routine, not disordered and capricious like passions, but motives founded in reason, supported by conscientious convictions, sure judgments, and a firm will." No finer definition of the ends and aims of a system of public education could be given.

We have not space to trace in detail the conflict between these two principles of ecclesiastic and lay education during the thirty years which have elapsed since the passage of the great educational laws of 1880-81. The attempt of the church to regain its lost ground has chiefly been along two lines—theoretical and practical. The theoretical reproach of the church against lay education is that it is impossible to inculcate any true system of morals without the sanction of religious revelation; the practical, that the growing criminality, vagabondage, alcoholism, infidelity of the French people is due to the fact that they have chased God from their schools.

Do you know, say the priests, what you have done in proscribing religious instruction? You have condemned morality—for there is no morality possible without the double notion of an avenging and a rewarding God and a soul which after this life experiences the pains or bliss of an eternal world. No ef-

forts of the human reason can attain to the conception either of God or of the eternal soul. These are mysteries which are revealed by divine grace. Therefore you need the ministration of the church and of its holy religion. We are the faith, say the Bishops. You are nothing. You have no certitude to announce—only weak speculations. You may instruct in positive knowledge, you cannot educate. Your morality has no authority to enforce its precepts. In fact it is no morality, because it derives from the human reason, while all morality derives from God. And God—as Jean Gerson said long ago—does not forbid certain acts because they are bad or enjoin certain acts because they are good. On the contrary, certain acts are bad because God forbids them and others good because he commands them. Who then will know what acts are good or bad? Only the priest, who has the mind of God in his revelation. He knows where sin begins and ends. He alone can teach morality.

And the champions of lay education reply to this: You claim to have the monopoly of God and the human soul! Would you have us believe that it is your religion—your little religion born only yesterday, with its narrow dogmas and irrational mysteries—that has given birth to the notion of God and the soul? No, these grand ideas have roots far deeper: they were not born 1900 years ago; they antedate all your systems: they belong to the timeless, eternal religion which stirred in the soul of the Hebrew prophet, the Greek dramatist and philosopher, the eastern mystic. You cannot confine them in the narrow bond of your formalisms. You cannot monopolize them in your cults. It is not God who lives by virtue of your religion; it is your religion and all religions that live by virtue of God. For the idea of God is born not of dogmas and sophistical arguments of scholastics, but rather of the contemplation and admiration of the splendors of nature, of the study of works which argue a master worker, of the patient protest of those who suffer unmerited evil, of hopes deceived and aspirations unattained, of the passion for a completeness of soul which the limitations and disappointments, the deceptions and weaknesses of this life will let us but glimpse darkly as in a glass, of the profound sentiment of our

moral liberty, our free will, the certainty (which resists the most subtle metaphysical reasonings) that we do what we will to do and that that very responsibility for our acts is the chief and growing honor of our manhood and womanhood.

More serious is the practical reproach which the church brings against the lay school. Behold the scandals of our present society, says the church, the increase of immorality, the opportunism and low standard of our public life, the waning sanctity of the family, the growth of luxury and extravagance. You are responsible for all that because you have destroyed in thousands of the young during the past generation the notions of good and evil which we inculcate, and have put nothing in their place. When your teachers attempt to teach morality they fail miserably, for they have assumed a rôle for which they are not fitted and usurped an office which they cannot perform. Moral education demands fixed principles, and such principles come only from divine revelation. Our state will go to ruin, our schools will become seminaries of infidelity and crime unless the training of the character of the young be restored to the clergy whom God has appointed to communicate his word and his light.

This reproach of the church against the lay school is serious and it has great weight with thousands and thousands of Frenchmen, because it is an undoubted fact that crime has increased in France as it has in every country of the world. The realization of a social condition is in the minds of many people sufficient proof of the cause alleged therefore. Probably ten people will complacently accept the statement that the increase of crime in France is due to the neglect of the Catholic religion, where one person will take the pains and give the thought to seek the real causes for this condition. These causes will be found probably in the growing concentration of the population in the cities, the crowding of families of workers in great urban centers where they are subjected to diverse temptations and live generally in conditions so unhygienic that the nervous system is seriously impaired and diseased, and loses its power of resistance very quickly. Alcoholism, a press which furnishes its readers with the worst sort of intellectual food—scandals, crimes, pornographic

fiction, and nauseating fact—the absence of any time in our busy industrial world for home training, the call of the factory and the office on the mothers, the daughters, the babies almost of the family, as well as on the fathers and grown sons—all these things have contributed to make vice familiar, accessible, and attractive to the young. And even if the family is respectable and anxious to protect the child against vice and leave him at least the legacy of honor and uprightness in the midst of its poverty, how difficult such an ideal is to realize in the surroundings in which most of the poor families must live. The father is at the factory or the shop, the mother probably has had to leave her baby at the *école maternelle* or the *crèche* to go to her work. The child, then, as soon as he has left school belongs to the street. He plays on the avenues and the squares and in the public gardens; he mixes with older comrades who have learned vicious ways; he repeats their vulgar songs; he laughs at the intoxicated men who stagger on the sidewalk or lie in the mud of the gutter; he stops to read the shameless or stupid posters which are spread on the walls. This is his direct training for life: this is the reality for him; the school only a disturbing incident in his day's life. It is in his free hours that his tastes are formed and his will shaped. And we can say without exaggeration that the surroundings in which the adolescent moves in our cities resemble more than anything else a sewer whose foul exhalations he breathes every hour. In this corrupted atmosphere the young plant, which would grow straight and vigorous under sane conditions, hardens, shrivels, and rots.

These evils, and not the exclusion of the catechism from the schools, are the cause of the increasing crime in France, as in America. Let us purify our social atmosphere, and let us find in our schools and the high moral tone there maintained one of the chief aids in this great work.

In spite of the labors of men like Buisson, Séailles, Jacob, Aulard, Jaurès, and Desjardins in behalf of lay education, the church made considerable gains during the last decade of the nineteenth century. In the first place the "congregations," or religious orders, multiplied rapidly in numbers and wealth; and since the

famous seventh article of the law of 1881 had failed these orders were allowed to have their schools in France. At the date when the congregations were forbidden to teach, at the beginning of the present century, there were over 20,000 private primary schools (most of them belonging to the orders) to 70,000 public primary schools in France. The power of the orders through their schools was one of the chief causes for the famous Associations Law of 1901. Then again, in the country districts especially, the priest still to a large degree maintained his control over education in spite of the law of 1881 repealing the *Loi Falloux*. Legally the schoolmaster was freed from ecclesiastical supervision and became dependent on the educational authorities of the state alone. Legally he was unhampered in his hour's lesson in *morale* each week. But practically and actually the influence of the priest with the ignorant peasant father or mother was sufficient to keep the schoolmaster in a position either of constant polemics or of sullen submission. The passage of a law in the Chamber of Deputies does not remake the character of twenty million peasants. Some laws are simply the registration of an actual social status: like the Bill of Rights prefixed to the Constitution of the United States. Others are the expression of "a consummation devoutly to be wished." The French laws of the laicization of the schools are of the latter sort. They have to be painfully and slowly wrought into the habits and thoughts of a people, for long centuries used to being led in all things ethical and religious by the omnipresent hand of the black-gowned priest.

But the signs all point to the absolute triumph of the lay school. Since the *Loi Falloux* was repealed in 1880 not a backward step has been taken. Primary education, fitting both boys and girls for a modest station in life, is free throughout France, and moral and civic instruction forms a part of the curriculum. Free normal schools for primary teachers are provided in every department, and are turning out the most highly trained masters and mistresses each year to insure the continued improvement of French instruction. Finally the religious orders, so long the serious competitors of the state in the education of the young,

have been forbidden to teach in France, and all grades of education have been placed under the direct authority of the minister of public instruction, through his agents at Paris and in the seventeen provincial academies of the University of France. Probably no other community in the world's history, not even the Jesuits of the seventeenth century nor the Puritans of New England, has accomplished so much in a single generation for the cause of education as have the men of the Third Republic in France.

Theirs has been a double task: to create the system and to educate the public to adopt the system. They have not had merely to provide educational facilities for a community eager to utilize them, thirsting for the kind of education they had to give. They have had to revive the discredited liberalism of a century past, to create a moral sentiment independent of the great religious body which claimed the monopoly of morals, to develop a scientific morality to oppose the theological morality of the church, to call out the need, furnish the means, and demonstrate the efficacy of a lay instruction in morals which should replace the catechism and the *Sacred History* of M. Wallon. And they have done their task well, inspired by the idea that they were laboring to raise France to her true position in the modern world by the classification, fortification, rationalization of the ideas of the growing generation, their deliverance from the age-long tutelage to the Roman Confession, their fidelity to the liberalizing, generous, and confident ideals of progress announced by the fathers of the French Revolution.

It is a work of democracy which these men have accomplished in the struggle for lay education, for it is the encouragement of faith in human nature, to know both its rights and its duties, to demand the one and to perform the other. The fine words of William Morris have been the motto of this group of liberal educators: "I maintain that every social order which does not tend with all its strength to the greatest good of all its members should be replaced by another order which at least strives to do this." They have acted consistently and bravely on the inspiring theory voiced by one of their number, Gratry, that

“man is a force whose greatness is yet unknown and every human being is a depository of the great law of evolution.”

References for further reading: A. Debidour, *L'église catholique et l'état sous la troisième république* (2 vols.); *Histoire des rapports de l'église et de l'état en France de 1789 à 1870* (Paris, 1899); J. C. Bracq, *France under the Republic* (Scribners, 1910), chap. xi; Alfred Croiset, *L'éducation morale dans l'université* (Paris, 1901); B. Jacob, *Pour l'école laïque* (Paris, 1901); Paul Bert, *Le cléricisme. Questions d'éducation nationale* (Paris, 1900); Paul Robiquet, *Discours et opinions de Jules Ferry* (Vol. III, *Lois scolaires*) (Paris, 1898); E. de Resbecq, *Code de l'enseignement primaire* (Paris, 1887), for the period 1850-57; F. E. Farrington, *French Secondary Schools*, chap. iv; Matthew Arnold, *A French Eton, or Middle-Class Education and the State* (London, 1864).